

Appl. No. 10/595,801
 Amdt. dated September 4, 2009
 Reply to Office action of August 4, 2009

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) Apparatus for attaching a replaceable blade to an ice skate, comprising:
 a holder adapted to be mounted to a boot;
 the holder including a fixed first portion and a second portion pivotally mounted to the first portion;
 the first and second portions including means for securing a first end and a second end of the replaceable blade, respectively,
 wherein the replaceable blade is under tension when the second portion is aligned with the first portion, and the second portion is at an angle with respect to the first portion when the replaceable blade is free from tension; and
 the holder having a member for fixing the second portion in alignment with the first portion.
2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, ~~wherein the~~ further comprising a latch is biased to automatically lock the second portion when the second portion is moved into alignment with the first portion.
3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein the second portion has a slot through which the latch passes when the latch is locked in alignment with the first portion.
4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the latch has a protrusion to prevent the latch from being released accidentally from the slot.
5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the latch or the second portion is shaped to receive a tool that is used to pry the latch loose.

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6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising means for providing lateral support ~~lateral strength~~ between the second portion and the first portion.
7. (Original) An ice skate, comprising:
 - a boot;
 - a replaceable blade;
 - a holder mounted to the boot, the holder including a fixed first portion and a second portion pivotally mounted to the first portion;
 - the first and second portions including means for engaging a first and a second end of the replaceable blade, respectively,
 - wherein the replaceable blade is under tension when the second portion is aligned with the first portion, and the second portion is at an angle with respect to the first portion when the replaceable blade is free from tension; and
 - the holder having a member for locking the second portion in alignment with the first portion.
8. (Original) The ice skate of claim 7, wherein the second portion can be moved into alignment with the first portion while the replaceable blade is engaging the holder, by application of about 133 newtons (30 pounds) of downward force on the boot.
9. (Original) The ice skate of claim 7, wherein the replaceable blade has approximately 890 newtons (200 lbs) of tension when the second portion is aligned with the first portion.
10. (Original) The ice skate of claim 7, wherein the engaging means include respective first and second slots for engaging the first and a second end of the replaceable blade.
11. (Original) Apparatus for attaching a replaceable blade to an ice skate, comprising:
 - a holder adapted to be mounted to a boot;

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the holder including a fixed first portion and a second portion pivotally mounted to the first portion;

the first and second portions including means for engaging a first and a second end of the replaceable blade, respectively,

wherein the replaceable blade is under tension when the second portion is aligned with the first portion, and the second portion is at an angle with respect to the first portion when the replaceable blade is free from tension; and

the holder has means for fixing the second portion in alignment with the first portion.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising means for providing lateral support ~~lateral strength~~ between the second portion and the first portion.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the means for providing lateral support ~~lateral strength~~ between the second portion in and the first portion includes a bayonet style locking tab, or a boss or detent.

14. (Original) Apparatus for attaching a replaceable blade to an ice skate, comprising:

a holder adapted to be mounted to a boot,

the holder including a fixed first portion and a second portion pivotally mounted to the first portion,

the first and second portions including means for engaging a first and a second end of the replaceable blade, respectively,

the holder having means for fixing the second portion in alignment with the first portion, with the replaceable blade under tension.

15. (Withdrawn – Currently Amended) A method for attaching a replaceable blade to ~~an~~ the ice skate of claim 7, the method comprising the steps of:

~~providing a holder adapted to be mounted to a boot, the holder including a fixed first portion and a second portion pivotally mounted to the first portion;~~

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engaging ~~a~~the first and a second ends of the replaceable blade with the respective first and second portions of the holder, respectively, with the second portion at an angle with respect to the first portion, and with the replaceable blade free from tension;
pivoting the second portion into alignment with the first portion; and
latching the second portion in alignment with the first portion.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, further comprising biasing a latch used to perform the latching, to automatically lock when the second portion is moved into alignment with the first portion.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, further comprising passing the latch through a slot in the holder when the latch is aligned with the first portion.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, further comprising:
inserting a tool in a pocket in the latch; and
prying the latch loose from the holder using the tool .

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, further comprising moving the second portion into alignment with the first portion while the replaceable blade is engaging the holder, by applying about 133 newtons (30 pounds) of downward force on the boot.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the replaceable blade has approximately 890 newtons (200 lbs) of tension when the second portion is aligned with the first portion.

21. The method of claim 15, further comprising moving the second portion into alignment with the first portion while the replaceable blade is engaging the holder, by pushing downwards on the holder using a foot that wears the skate.

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22. (Withdrawn Currently Amended) A method for attaching a replaceable blade to ~~an~~the ice skate of claim 7, comprising the steps of:

donning ~~an~~the ice skate ~~having a holder mounted to a bottom of the ice skate, the holder including a fixed first portion and a second portion pivotally mounted to the first portion;~~

engaging ~~a~~the first and ~~a~~the second end of the replaceable blade with the respective first and second portions of the holder, respectively, with the second portion at an angle with respect to the first portion, and with the replaceable blade free from tension;

applying onto the skate at least a portion of the weight of a person wearing the ice skate, sufficiently to align the second portion with respect to the first portion; and

automatically locking the second portion in alignment with the first portion.

23. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 22, wherein the weight applying step includes standing while wearing the ice skate.

24. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 22, wherein the weight applying step includes pushing the replaceable blade against a fixed surface with a foot of the person wearing the skate.